

[*Laughter*] And when I'm gone from Washington, he'll be a Congressman, thanks to you. Thank you very, very much.

Mike, let me just say one other thing. I just wanted to say, on a very serious note and kind of a non-political note, as you know, I badly wanted to be there tonight. I have been working for the last 8 days, trying to restore calm in the Middle East. And I've been on the phone all day today and have some more work to do late tonight, and I'm terribly sorry I could not be there. But after the loss of our sailors in Yemen yesterday and the continued violence in the Middle East, I just thought I had to stay here and work. We may get a breakthrough sometime in the next several hours. We're working hard, trying to turn this thing around. I hope you'll all say a prayer for us tonight, and I hope you'll forgive me for not being there. But just know that it has nothing to do with my profound desire to see you elected.

State Senator Mike Ross. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, very much. We're going to win this thing. We're going to win it for you. We're going to win it for the Democratic Party.

The President. Thank you. And thank you, Vic. Thank you, Marion, and thanks, John and Penny. Goodbye, folks. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 p.m. from the Residence at the White House to the dinner at a private residence in Little Rock, AR. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts John and Penny Burkhalter. Mike Ross is a candidate for Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks on the Situation in the Middle East

October 14, 2000

Good morning. As you know, we have been working for more than a week now to try to persuade the parties in the Middle East to find a way out of the recent cycle of violence, find a way back to negotiations. I'm very pleased that Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have accepted President Mubarak's invitation to attend a summit at

Sharm al-Sheikh. The summit will convene this Monday, and in the meantime, we expect that both parties will do all in their power to cease hostilities and halt the violence.

Our central objectives must now be to stop the violence, to restore calm and safety, to agree on a factfinding mechanism concerning how this began and how it can be prevented from occurring again, and to find a way back to dialog and negotiations.

Now, we should be under no illusions. The good news is, the parties have agreed to meet, and the situation appears to be calmer. But the path ahead is difficult. After the terrible events of the past few days, the situation is still quite tense. But President Mubarak and I are convinced that we must make every effort to break the cycle of violence.

Now, as all of you know, I have to go to Denver. I'm running a little late. But the truth is, we're in that period of time where, I believe, leading up to the summit, the less those of us say who are going to be there, the better. And so at least for the moment, I want to let my statement stand for itself. But I assure you I will continue to do everything I can to minimize the violence and to do all the preparation necessary to maximize the chances of a successful meeting.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:38 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

The President's Radio Address

October 14, 2000

Good morning. This week an apparent terrorist attack claimed the lives of brave American sailors off the coast of Yemen, and new violence erupted between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East.

Our sailors aboard the U.S.S. *Cole* were simply doing their duty, but a dangerous duty, standing guard for peace. Yesterday I spoke to the Captain of the *Cole*, Commander Kirk Lippold. On behalf of all Americans, I expressed our deepest sympathies and commended him and his crew for the